

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8657

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

S E C R E T LIBREVILLE 2621

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PINT, PINS, CM, EK, GB

SUBJECT: REPORTED GABONESE TROOP MOVEMENTS EXPLAINED

REF: YAOUNDE 4632

1. IN COURSE GENERAL CONVERSATION DECEMBER 7 WITH FRENCH AMBASSADOR DELAUNEY, LATTER MENTIONED RUMORS PASSED TO HIM FROM PARIS OF GABONESE AND FRENCH TROOP MOVEMENTS TOWARD CAMEROONAIN BORDER AND TOOK INITIATIVE TO PROVIDE EXPLANATION OF WHATACTUALLY HAPPENDED.

2. ACCORDING TO DELAUNEY, NEITHER GABONESE NOR FRENCH HAVE MOVED ANY TROOPS TOWARD BORDER SINCE MEYO-KYE INCIDENT OCCURRED. WEEK OR SO BEFORE INCIDENT, HOWEVER, GABONESE SENT 5 APCS WITH ABOUT 60 MEN, TO REINFORCE GENDARMERIE UNITS ALONG BORDER WITH EQUATORIAL GUINEA. DETACHMENT ACCCOMPANIED BY THREE OR FOUR FRENCH TECHNICAL ADVISERS, WHO TO DELAUNEYS KNOWLEDGE ARE ONLY FRENCH MILITARY ANYWHERE NORTH OF LIBREVILLE. DELAUNEY ADDED THAT IDEA OF FRENCH TROOPS MOVING TOWARD BORDER WAS ABUSRD ON IT FACE, AND AFFIRMED CATEGORICALLY THAT NO SUCH MOVEMENT HAD TAKEN PLACE.

3. IN COURSE CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT DECEMBER 8, HE REVERTED BRIEFLY TO FAVORITE THEME OF CONCERN AT POTENTIAL THREAT POSED BY CERTAIN OF HIS NEIGHBORS. LIKE AHIDJO (YAOUNDE 4702) BOGO CITED EQUATORIAL GUNIEA AND CONGO AS MOST WORRISOME, AND ALSO NOTED UNHAPPILY SOVIET ARMS DELIVERIES TO CHAD AND SEEMING INSTABILITY OF " EMPIRE" IN CAR. HE MADE NO REFERENCE AT ALL TO

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CAMEROON IN THIS CONTEXT, THEREBY IN EFFECT CLASSIFYING GURC AS

COUNTRY WITH WHICH NO SERIOUS PROBLMES EXIST.

4. COMMENT: COMBINATIONOUR PREVIOUS OBSERVATIONS, DELAUNAY DENIAL OF FRENCH TROOP MOVEMENTS, AND BONGO EVIDENT UNCONCERN OVER RELATINS WITH CAMEROON REINFORCES CONVICTION EXPRESSED IN LIBREVILLE 2419 THAT CAMEROONIAN ALLEGATIONS OF GABONESE AND/OR FRENCH TROOP MOVEMENT AIMED AT THEM ARE WITHOUT FOUNDATION. FROM FACT DELAUNAY RECEIVED SAME REPORTS PLAYED BACK THROUGH PARIS, GURC SOURCES EVIDENTLY PUT OUT STORY TO THIS EFFECT IN SEVERAL DIRECTIONS. GOF HAS PRESUMABLY GOTTEN REACTION FROM DELAUNAY ALONG LINES OF HIS REMARKS TO ME. STEIGMAN

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NNN

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